

Main Street and Broadway Building
100 Main Street
Natchez
Adams County
Mississippi

HABS No. MS-193

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MISS,
1-NATCH,
27-*

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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MISS,
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

MAIN STREET AND BROADWAY BUILDING

HABS No. MS-193

Location: 100 Main Street, Natchez, Adams County, Mississippi.

Present Owner: Thomas Guercio, 607 Washington Street, Natchez (1975).

Present Occupant and Use: Natchez Lumber & Supply Company, used for storage.

Significance: The commercial structure at Main Street and Broadway has the finest cast iron facade in Natchez.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: ca. 1851, enlarged ca. 1890.
2. Architect: Unknown.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The following is a partial and incomplete chain of title to the land on which the Main Street and Broadway Building stands. Reference is to the Deed Books of Natchez, Adams County, Mississippi.

1850	March 11, 1850, Deed (DB HH/30). Samuel Newman, Commissioner, to Lewis Saunders. Consideration: \$476.
1851	February 28, 1851, Deed (DB HH/548). Lewis Saunders to Thomas Henderson. Consideration: \$1,000.
1866	February 29, 1866, Deed (DB/00/12). John Henderson, executor of the Thomas Henderson estate, to Clarrissa Sharp; mention is made of a two-story brick building and cotton shed. Consideration: \$25,000.
1882	December 22, 1882, Deed (YY/40) Frank Aniglis, special commission to Fanny Bentura Hendricks ... "the property formerly known as the Henderson Cotton Yard and Warehouse." Consideration: \$1.
1884	May 19, 1884, Deed (DBYY/790). Fanny B. Hendricks to S. E. Rumble and T. V. Wensel. Consideration: \$7,500.
1890	March 17, 1890, Deed (DB 3E-223). S. E. Rumble and T. V. Wensel to Rumble and Wensel & Company. Consideration: \$25,000.
1945	April 30, 1945, Deed (DB 51/52). Rumble and Wensel & Company to Alfred Bersia and Booth Strange. Consideration: \$10.

1947 March 1947, Deed (DB 5R-416). Alfred Bersia and Booth Strange to Thomas Bersia. Consideration: \$10.

4. Supplier: The iron front was manufactured by Pullis Brothers of St. Louis, Missouri.
5. Original plans and construction: As originally constructed, the commerical building at Main Street and Broadway was only seven bays wide. The bays were separated by a series of eight, one-story, iron columns. Windows of the second floor were treated with lintels set into the exposed brick, which appears to have been the finish material for the second floor.
6. Alterations and additions: ca. 1890 the building was extended eastward by four bays and a cast iron front was installed at the second level. These additions were manufactured by the maker of the original cast-iron columns. The composition presents a unified appearance.

B. Historical Context:

In 1851 Thomas Henderson and Company purchased several lots and constructed the nucleus of the existing building shortly thereafter. From 1884 until 1945 the property was owned by the firm of Rumble & Wensel, cotton factors, grocers, and "dealers in produce and provisions." Ca. 1890 significant additions and alterations to the structure were undertaken, giving it its present form.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The cast iron front is the first of its kind found in Natchez.
2. Condition of fabric: Fair.

B. Description of the exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The rectangular building measures 65' by 114'. It is two stories high and numbers eleven bays.
2. Foundations: Brick.
3. Walls: The walls are constructed of seven course, common bond brick. The facade is finished with a cast iron front.
4. Structural system: The brick walls are load-bearing.
5. Chimneys: There is one small brick stove chimney.

6. Openings: The double leaf, grazed and paneled doors are fitted into each of the eleven bays. There are two over two double hung windows on the second floor of the main facade, and on the east elevation. Six over six double hung windows were constructed on the west elevation.
7. Roof: The hipped roof is covered with shingles. The cast iron cornice of the facade is designed with an elaborate of brackets, modillions, and rosettes. A stepped brick cornice appears on the earlier, west elevation.

C. Site:

The building faces northeast and is placed directly upon the Main Street sidewalk.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

C. M. McCormick, ed. Natchez, Mississippi on Top, Not "Under the Hill."
Natchez: Daily Democrat Steam Pring, n.d.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

Project coordinated by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Elbert Hilliard, Director; data compiled by William Allen, Architectural Historian, April 1975.

Edited by Marion K. Schlefer, Historic American Buildings Survey, Washington, D.C., 1985.